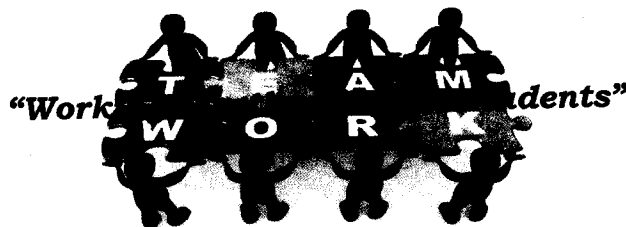


**HALE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**  
*Osie A. Pickens, Superintendent*

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Received & Inspected

OCT 17 2013

FCC Mail Room

October 2, 2013

Hale County Board  
of Education

Dexter Thornton  
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Verlander Jones  
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District V

Osie A. Pickens  
Executive Secretary

Commission's Secretary  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir:

We write to provide Comments to the FCC on the E-Rate NPRM, proceeding 13-184. The E-Rate has been of great importance to our school district because it has helped our students and teachers gain access to a wealth of online resources, to communicate and collaborate, and to develop the 21st century skills necessary for college and career. However, E-Rate funding levels have not kept pace with our district's future bandwidth needs. We urge you to consider raising the E-rate funding level to at least \$5 billion per year, which is close to the average demand level for each of the past two years.

As an E-Rate Contact and Curriculum Coordinator and Technology Coordinator for Hale County School District in Alabama, we know that seamlessly infusing digital learning throughout the school curriculum is a pre-requisite for students to graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's global economy. Access to high speed broadband is the key for modern teaching and learning to occur in all schools across the country.

In our district, we use digital learning to personalize learning, provide online classes, meet common core state standards, administer online assessments, and make data driven decisions. For example, all of our schools have transitioned to using online summative and formative assessments. This not only allows for proper preparation of our students for the technological demands of the world outside of school, but it also provides a means by which teachers and administrators can receive immediate and accurate feedback on student academic performance. In addition, our district uses online classes to expand the opportunities that our students have for completing more diverse coursework. No longer limited to what we can offer based on the number of teachers we have, our schools offer classes that were previously unavailable to our students, such as foreign languages, advanced sciences, and extracurricular classes.

Our district's network is currently just keeping up with demand, and the need for a high speed reliable network is only going to increase in the near future.

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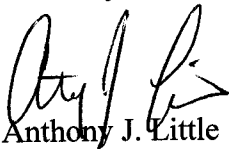
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The E-rate program has been a phenomenal success in bringing Internet access to almost every classroom in America. In the last funding cycle, applications from schools and libraries totaled more than \$5 billion, more than double the available funding. We respectfully urge the FCC to increase funding for the E-Rate program to at least \$5 billion to meet this demand. All students need access to high speed broadband. Our nation's future depends on their success.

Our school district has also greatly benefited from E-rate funding for telecommunications services (including VoIP), basic maintenance of internal connections, and web hosting services. Elimination of E-rate funding for these services will negatively impact the financial operations of Hale County School District. We respectfully urge the FCC to continue to fund these services.

We greatly appreciate your time and attention to these requests.

Sincerely,



Anthony J. Little

E-rate Contact/Curriculum Coordinator



Michael C. Ryans

Technology Coordinator

djc/AJL/MCR